

UA 319/98 Fear of torture or ill-treatment / Illegal detention 23 December 1998

GUINEA Alpha Condé, President of the Rally of the Guinean People (RPG)
Antoine Soromou, alias Gbogolo, Alpha Condé's bodyguard
Marcel Cros, President of the African Democratic Party
Fanta Cissé (f)
Mariam Condé (f)
Nyalen Camara (f)
and several other supporters of opposition parties

The above-named opposition party members and a number of their supporters have been arrested and are in incommunicado detention, after questioning the fairness of the recent presidential elections on 14 December 1998. Torture and ill-treatment in detention is widespread, particularly in the first days and in incommunicado detention, and Amnesty International has grave fears for their safety.

Alpha Condé, President of the party *Rassemblement du Peuple de Guinée* (RPG), Rally of the Guinean People, and a candidate in the elections was arrested, and reportedly also beaten, by military soldiers on 15 December in Lola, nearly 1,000 kms from the capital Conakry. He is now detained, in appalling conditions, at Koundara military camp in Conakry. His bodyguard, Antoine Soromou, alias Gbogolo, was arrested with him.

Marcel Cros, President of the *Parti Démocratique Africain* (PDA), African Democratic Party and several other opposition party members, including from the *Parti pour le Renouveau et le Progrès* (PRP), Party for Progress and Revival, have also been detained.

At least 20 women, including Fanta Cissé, Mariam Condé and Nyalen Camara, were later arrested by security forces on 21 December for staging a nude protest against the detention of Alpha Condé. They are being held at the *Maison Centrale*, Central Prison in Conakry. According to the director of National Security, they have been charged with "public disorder and offending public decency".

The day before, police had opened fire on demonstrators also calling for the release of Alpha Condé, in Siguri, some 700 kms east of the capital, killing two people.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

According to official election results the incumbent President, General Lansana Conté, who seized power in 1984, won an overwhelming majority with 56%. Opposition parties have, however, accused the government of rigging the results by denying their supporters voting cards.

Freedom of speech has been severely restricted during President Conté's rule; opposition supporters and journalists have been arrested on many occasions for their non-violent activities and endured appalling conditions of detention. At trials earlier this year, detainees spoke of how they had been tortured after their arrest.

In October, El Hadj Biro Diallo, the Speaker of the National Assembly and member of Guinea's ruling party was suspended after he attacked the country's human rights record. He condemned the use of torture and ill-treatment to obtain confessions and appealed to

President Conté to take preventive action.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please send telegrams/faxes/express/airmail letters in French or your own language:

- calling on the Guinean authorities to immediately release Alpha Condé, Antoine Soromou, alias Gbogolo, Marcel Cros, Fanta Cissé, Mariam Condé, Nyalen Camara and other opposition party supporters unless they are to be charged with a recognizably criminal offence;
- calling on the Guinean authorities to allow the detainees immediate and continued access to their families and others;
- seeking assurances that the detainees are not being tortured or ill-treated and that their physical integrity will be protected.

APPEALS TO

President

Son Excellence

Monsieur Lansana CONTE

President de la République

La Présidence

Conakry

République de Guinée

Telegrams: President Lansana Conté, Conakry, Guinée

Salutation: Monsieur le Président / Dear President

Minister of Justice

Monsieur Maurice Zobélérou Togba

Garde des Sceaux et

Ministre de la Justice

Ministère de la Justice

Conakry

République de Guinée

Telegrams: Ministre Justice, Conakry, Guinée

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister.

Minister of Interior

Monsieur Abbidine Sanoussi ZAÏNOUAL

Ministre de l'Intérieur et de la Décentralisation

Ministère de l'Intérieur et de la Décentralisation

Conakry

République de Guinée

Telegrams: Ministre L'Intérieur, Décentralisation, Conakry, Guinée.

Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

Minister of Foreign Affairs

Monsieur Lamine Kamara

Ministre des Affaires Etrangères

Ministère des Affaires Etrangères

Conakry

République de Guinée

Telegrams: Ministre Affaires Etrangères, Conakry, Guinée
Faxes: + 224 41 16 21 (Please note: fax tone may be difficult to obtain)
Salutation: Monsieur le Ministre / Dear Minister

COPIES TO :

Procureur de la République
Palais de Justice
Conakry
République de Guinée

L'indépendant, B.P 242, Faxes: 00 224 41 32 34, Conakry, République de Guinée
Le Lynx, B.P 4968, Faxes: 00 224 45 36 96, Conakry, République de Guinée
Horoya, B.P 341 / 191, Conakry, République de Guinée

and to diplomatic representatives of Guinea accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 3 February 1999.